

PERFIN SOCIETY AUCTIONS

Dave Hill

I bid in our auctions but my interest is usually limited to mixed lots of early GB stamps. My recent research in old auction lists has shown me what a wealth of other material and information is contained therein. Take for instance the Auction List No.5 (1998). The first page alone includes the following, which I now wish I had put in a bid.

Lot 19 was an 1896 QV cover with a 1d Lilac perfin, BG/&/TF with the identity of Bankers Guarantee & Trust Fund and a modest reserve of £2 (*Selling price £8-50*).

Checking in the latest Tomkins Catalogue of Identified Perfins reveals this is a new identity. The only perfin known with this letter arrangement is B3160.

I apologise if the new owner of this cover intended to report it but so often these new identities are not reported.

Lot 27 is a much-travelled QEII cover with the perfin GM and the identity of Clerical Medical & General Life Assurance. This perfin is not known with this identity. Did the GM stand for General & Medical?

At the bottom of the page is **Lot 40**, a GB 12/- Building & Civil Engineering Holiday Scheme stamp. It has a perfin SA/McA at only 30p. (*Selling price £1-10p*)

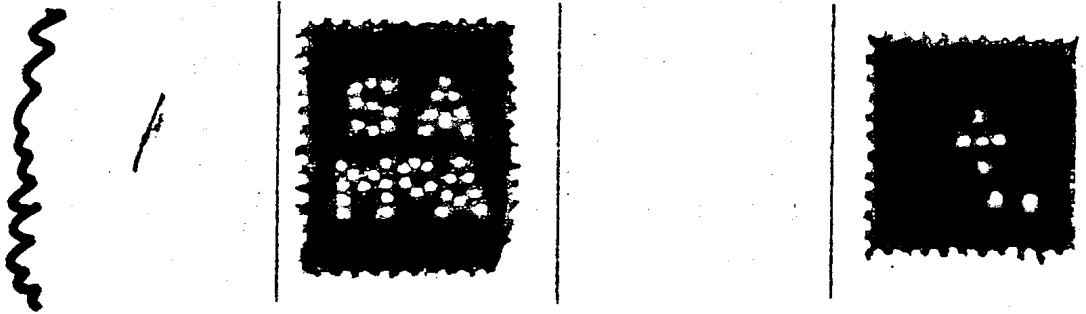
This letter arrangement is not known on postage stamps but I do have a copy of what we call Sloper's second ledger. This is a list of firms and their perfins which Sloper's used in their works. Sloper's had many thousands of dies and this ledger made sure they used the right ones. There are 3 columns and we think these were: - the perfins for postage stamps in the first column, overprints for receipt stamps in the second column and insurance and holiday stamps in the third.

Few of the insurance and holiday stamps are known and they are not my collecting field. These perfins were often numbers or strange patterns of

pins, perhaps formed by a "ballot" machine with removable pins.

I find in the ledger that this perfin is listed against the name of Sir A MacAlpine & Co Ltd (in the postage stamp column but these rules were often broken)

MacAlpine Sir A. & Co.Ltd.



The '1' before the first column shows a single die. Where a '12' is noted it means that the machine was a 12x1 multihead which would perforate a whole row of the sterling stamps. (Changed to 10 when decimalisation came in 1971)

So the plea goes out once again, if you buy a cover through the auction which has a new identity, please report it to the Catalogue Editor.

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